For more information about FoodNet, see the FoodNet website:
http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet

From the Foodborne and Diarrheal Diseases Branch (FDDB), Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases, National Center for Infectious Diseasea

FoodNet News

Volume 4, No. 2 , Spring 2003

Activities "Down Under:" A Visit to Australia's OzFoodNet

This past September, the Foodborne & Diarrheal Diseases Branch's Chief of the Outbreak, Response & Surveillance Unit, Dr. Paul Mead, and FoodNet's Program Coordinator, Malinda Kennedy, were invited by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing to participate as part of a formal independent Review Team for Australia's OzFoodNet and to advise on its overall utility and value to the Commonwealth.

For a related article on international foodborne disease activity, see update on WHO Global SamSurv on page 3.

In 2000, Australia established OzFoodNet as a collaborative system to help enhance the existing passive surveillance systems for foodborne disease in Australia. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) funds each state and territory for the employment of one or more epidemiologists whose jobs focus entirely on routine surveillance, outbreak investigation, and applied research on foodborne illness. In addition to this staff, a coordinating epidemiologist and a data manager, in conjunction with a management group, provide organization of OzFoodNet activities.

FoodNet is currently funded until June 2003 and has an annual cost of $2 million.

Currently, FoodNet and OzFoodNet are collaborating to draft a series of manuscripts on the national burden of foodborne illness in the two countries (U.S. and Australia). Ireland and Canada have surveillance systems similar to those of FoodNet and OzFoodNet and are also participating in this collaboration. The goal of the collaboration is to compare the different surveillance approaches and to assess the impact of these approaches on each nation's estimates of the burden of foodborne illness.

In March of 2003, Dr. Fred Angulo and Dr. Matt Moore from FoodNet will be participating in an "International FoodNet" meeting in Australia. Other participants include OzFoodNet, Health Canada, Ireland Food Authority, and the World Health Organization. The participating organizations will have the opportunity to exchange information on approaches to foodborne diseases surveillance and investigations.

Inside this issue:

New FoodNet Cooperative Agreement with the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health: Q&A's

FoodNet is a large, multi-centered project. Results from the various FoodNet studies provide information for national decision-making. We are pleased to begin a collaboration with the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, whose staff will provide epidemiological and statistical assistance in designing and interpreting FoodNet studies.

Q: What is the purpose of this collaboration?

A: *The purpose of this collaboration is to independently validate epidemiologic methods used by FoodNet and to improve the efficiency of FoodNet studies.*

Q: What are the names and qualifications of the persons who were awarded the FoodNet contract?

A: *Principal Investigator: George Madlanado,MSPH, PhD., Epidemiologist; Co-Investigator: Timothy Church, PhD., Biostatistician; Co-Investigator: Craig Hedberg, PhD., Epidemiologist. All are associate professors in the Department of Environmental & Occupational Health at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health.*

Q: What are the initial specific aims of this collaborative effort?

A: *1.) Develop method of reducing the magnitude of uncertainty inherent in our burden of illness estimates.*
2.)Participate in the evaluation approach for representing trends in foodborne illness which utilize FoodNet Data for all years and sites.
3.) Assess the design of case-control studies of sporadic foodborne illness and advise on the best approach for the interpretation of data collected from these studies.
4.) Consult on an endeavor to attribute foodborne illness in the U.S. to specific food commodities.

Q: What is the time frame of this collaborative process?

A: *This collaboration is initially funded for one year with potential of funding for up to three years.*

FoodNet Welcomes New Staff Members: Matt Moore, Katrina Kretsinger, Taha Kass-Hout & Yin Zhang!

Matt Moore is a Medical Epidemiologist and Chief of FoodNet. Previously he worked as an EIS Officer in the Respiratory Branch of CDC's Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases from 2000-2002. Dr. Moore obtained an MPH in epidemiology from the University of California, Berkeley, completed an infectious diseases fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco, and received an MD and completed an internal medicine residency at Johns Hopkins University.

Taha Kass-Hout is the Foodborne and Diarrheal Diseases Branch's new Scientific Data Manager/BIMB Attachment Supervisor. He received an MS in Biostatistics and an MD from the University of Texas. Recently, he completed his dissertation for PhD in Biostatistics from the University of Texas.

Katrina Kretsinger joins FoodNet as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer. She attended the University of Virginia, where she received a BA in government, Cornell University where she received an MA in government. Dr. Kretsinger attended Harvard Medical School, where she received an MD. She completed her residency at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA.

Yin Zhang joins the Foodborne and Diarrheal Diseases Branch as a SAS Programmer for FoodNet and NARMS. Previously, Yin worked for Ericsson Tele-communications Company Ltd. In Nanjing, China as a Project manager.

Yin attended the University of North Carolina where he received an MS in Information Technology. Currently, Yin is completing an MBA from the same university.

NCID's Latest Web Site: Healthy Pets, Healthy People

Pets provide many benefits to humans. They give us comfort and companionship. However, pets can also be a source of infections. Contact with pets and other animals have been risk factors in several FoodNet case control studies inlcuding: *Salmonella* and reptiles and *E. coli* and farm visits.

Although animals can carry bacteria and other disease-causing germs, it is important to know that people are more likely to be exposed to some of these disease-causing agents by contaminated food or water than by a pet or another animal. The CDC has created a website to provide people with information about the health-related risks of owning and caring for animals. Links are located throughout the website for general information about companion and wild animals and the diseases they can carry.

Many groups encourage people to enjoy the benefits of common household pets. By following CDC's simple tips on the *Healthy Pets, Healthy People* website, people can enjoy their pets while protecting themselves against diseases they might carry.

The website offers important information about safe practices for handling domestic animals and avoiding wild ones.

The *Healthy Pets, Healthy People* website went live on-line in mid-October 2002. This website serves as a user-friendly clearinghouse for populations at high risk as well as health care professionals.

Visit *Healthy* *Pets, Healthy People* at:http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets.

The Foodborne and Diarrheal Diseases Branch is managing this website. Please send any comments or suggestions to Sara Berhane at SBerhane@cdc.gov.

CLINICAL INFECTIOUS DISEASES (CID) SUPPLEMENT:

MANUSCRIPTS FROM FOODNET

Clinical Infectious Diseases has agreed to review over 20 manuscripts that are based on FoodNet data. These manuscripts will be considered for publication in a special supplement of *Clinical Infectious Diseases* and will highlight some of the major achievements of FoodNet, including results of the population survey, case-control studies, and surveillance summaries. FoodNet welcomes this opportunity and looks forward to working with the journal throughout this process. The lead author and topic of some of these manuscripts are the following:

1. Angulo, F., et al. , Reptiles, amphibians, and human *Salmonella* infection: A population-based, case-control study.

2. Voetsch, A. C., et al., FoodNet estimate of the burden of illness caused by non-typhoidal *Salmonella* infections in the UnitedStates.

3. Bender, J., et al., Surveillance of *E. coli* O157:H7 infection in FoodNet sites, 1996-1999.

4. Chatterjee, N.K., et al., Molecular epidemiology of outbreaks of viral gastroenteritis in New York State, 1998-1999.

5. Glynn, M.K., et al., Prior antimicrobial use increases sporadic infections with multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* enteric serotype Typhimurium: A FoodNet case control study.

6. Henessey, T.W., et al., A survey of physician diagnostic practices for patients with acute diarrhea: Clinical and public health implications.

7. Hennesy, T.W., et al., Egg consumption is the principal risk factor for sporadic *Salmonella* serotype Heidelberg infections: A case-control study in FoodNet sites.

8. Jones, J.L., et al., Survey of clinical laboratory practices, parasitic diseases.

9. Kassenborh, H., et al., Farm visits and undercooked hamburgers as major risk factors to sporadic *Escerichia coli* O157:H7 infections— data from a case-control study in five FoodNet sites.

10. Kassenborg, H., et al., Fluoroquinoline-resistant *Campylobacter* infections: Eating poultry outside the home and foreign travel are risk factors.

11. Kimura, A., et al., Chicken, a newly identified risk factor for sporadic *Salmonella* serotype Enteritidis infections in the United States: A case-control study in FoodNet sites.

12. Marcus, R., et al., Dramatic decrease in *Salmonella* serotype enteritidis (SE) in FoodNet sites, 1996-1998.

13. Ray, S., et al., Population-based active surveillance for *Yersinia* enterocolitica infection: Higher risk of disease in infants and minority populations.

14. Rees, J., et al., Persistent diarrhea, arthritis and other complications of enteric infections: A pilot study.

15. Rowe, S., et al., Breastfeeding decreases risk of sporadic Salmonellosis among infants in FoodNet sites.

16. Samuel, M. et al., Epidemiology of sporadic *Campylobacter* infection in the United States declining trend in B16:B26 incidence: FoodNet 1996-1999.

17. Shiferaw, B., et al., Trends in population-based active surveillance for shigellosis and demographic variability in five FoodNet sites, 1996-1999.

18. Vugia, D., et al., Invasive *Salmonella* infections in the United States, FoodNet 1996-1999. Incidence, serotype distribution, and outcome.

19. Jones, T., et al. , Limitation to successful investigation and reporting of foodborne outbreaks: An analysis of foodborne disease outbreaks in FoodNet catchment areas, 1998-1999.

20. Kennedy, M., et al., Hospitalizations and deaths from *Salmonella* infections, FoodNet 1996-1999.

21. Mishu-Allos, B., et al., Supplement forward: Overview of FoodNet.

22. Hardnett, F., et al., Generalizability of FoodNet data.

23. Voetsch, D. et al., Laboratory practice in the FoodNet sites, 1995-2000.

24. Imhoff, B., et al., The substancial burden of self-reported acute diarrheal illness, United States: FoodNet areas, 1998-1999.

WHO Global *Salmonella* Surveillance Activities: 2002

In addition to participation in international FoodNet activities such as OzFoodNet, FoodNet personnel have also been involved in WHO Global Salm-Surv activities.

Initiated in January 2000, World Health Organization (WHO) Global Salm-Surv is a global network of national and regional public health, veterinary, and food reference laboratories and individuals involved in *Salmonella* surveillance. The WHO Global Salm-Surv network includes of Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Health Canada, Danish Veterinary Institute, and Institut Pasteur. The program's primary goals are to enhance the capacity and quality of *Salmonella* surveillance, isolation, identification, serotyping, and antimicrobial susceptibility testing throughout the world, and to support local interventions that reduce the human health burden of *Salmonella* and other foodborne diseases. WHO Global Salm-Surv's main project components include: 1) regional training courses, 2) a moderated electronic discussion group, 3) an external quality assurance system (EQAS), and 4) a website (www.who.int/salmsurv) and country databank.

WHO Global Salm-Surv conducted 6 regional training courses in 2002 in the following countries: Thailand (Level III),Poland (Level I), Jordan (Level II), Trinidad and Tobago (Level I), Cameroon (Level I), and China (Level II). Course levels I and II provide microbiologists bench-top training in *Salmonella* isolation, identification, serotyping, and antimicrobial susceptibility testing, and also basic epidemiology training. The level III course provides both microbiologists and epidemiologists with training in basic foodborne disease surveillance and foodborne outbreak investigation methods. This course provides a forum for microbiologists and epidemiologists to form collaborative relationships.

Five WHO Global Salm-Surv abstracts were presented at the 3rd International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases in Atlanta, GA (March 2002). Additionally, Dr. Anne Petersen's manuscript describing the results from Global Salm-Surv's EQAS was accepted by the journal Microbial Drug Resistance (in press). WHO Global Salm--Surv completed the third EQAS cycle in 2002 and results will be published in 2003.

Fortnightly electronic discussion group messages that provide information on Salmonella and other foodborne diseases are now offered in English, Spanish, French, and Arabic. If you would like to become a WHO Global Salm-Surv member and receive these messages, please contact Beth Imhoff (Bimhoff@cdc.gov).

FoodNet News

DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta, GA 30333

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300

Return Service Requested

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
PHS/CDC
Permit No. G-284

FoodNet Abstracts Presented at the Infectious Diseases Society of America Annual Meeting

The complete abstracts are available at the following website: http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet/mce/upcoming_conferences/2002/idsa2002.htm

- **Charles L, Molbak K, Hadler J, Jones T, Vugia D, Smith K, Hawkins M, Shillam P, Cieslak p, Segler S, Morse D, Angulo, F, and the EIP FoodNet Working Group.** Decline in Major Bacterial FoodBorne Illnesses in the United States: FoodNet, 1996-2001. Infectious Diseases Society of America. Chicago, IL, October 2002.

- **Lay J, Varma J, Vugia D, Jones T, Zansky S, Marcus R, Segler S, Medus C, Blythe D, and The EIP FoodNet Working Group.** Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Foodborne Illness, 2000. Infectious Diseases Society of America. Chicago, IL, October 2002.

- **Banerjee A, Frierman M, Hurd S, Jones T, McCarthy P, Medus C, Shiferaw B, Vugia D, Zansky S, and the EIP FoodNet Working Group.** Characterization of High Risk Food Consumption Practices Among the Hispanic Population, FoodNet 2000-2001. Infectious Diseases Society of America. Chicago, IL, October 2002.

Note to Readers: We are eager to spotlight other studies in future "foodNet News" issues. Is there a project you'd like to know more about? Is there a new member of your FoodNet team that you would like to introduce? Please contact us!

FoodNet News is available at the FoodNet web site at: http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet/news.htm
To receive regular copies of **FoodNet News**, send your request to:
FoodNet News
c/o Molly R. Frierman
1600 Clifton Road, NE
Mailstop D-63
Atlanta, GA 30333
Fax: (404) 371-5444
or subscribe online at:
www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/foodnet